

House Republican Press Release

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Senate Approves Identity Theft Bill Cosponsored By Rep. Bielawa



On Wednesday, April 26, the State Senate unanimously approved legislation cosponsored by State Rep. Hank Bielawa, R-2nd, that would help protect Connecticut residents from Identity Theft. House Bill 5694, An Act Concerning The Unlawful Use Or Possession Of Scanning Devices And Reencoders, now moves Governor M. Jodi Rell for final approval.

HB 5694 would require businesses to take reasonable steps to ensure any documents containing a customer's personal information are shredded or otherwise rendered unreadable. Under the bill, "personal information" includes such identifying information as a signature and Social Security, bank, and credit card numbers. It also requires disposal companies to take reasonable measures to protect against unauthorized access to personal information.

In addition, the bill prohibits using a scanner to read the information on a customer's payment card without permission or to use a reencoder to take information from a payment card and encode it on a different card without. It also authorizes the attorney general to sue to enforce the provisions and set criminal penalties for them.

"With the constant advancements in computers and the Internet, identity theft has become a boon for criminals" said Rep. Bielawa. "They keep coming up with new ways to steal personal information and unfortunately, focus much of their efforts on older people. This legislation is a good step forward toward helping prevent identity theft and consumer fraud."